The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

Long, long ago on Mary's knees
  Was cradled, from above,
A little child on whom God smiled
  His Christmas gift of love.
Men's hearts were bitter and unjust,
  And cruel hands were strong;
But all was hushed, and hope and trust
  And peace began their song.

Whene'er the Father's Christmas gifts
  Seem only frost and snow
And anxious stress and loneliness
  And poverty and woe,
Behold the birthplace, rude and strange,
  In which a Christ-child lies!
O welcome guest, thy cradle nest
  Is always God's surprise!

For trouble, cold, and dreary care
  Are angels in disguise,
And greeted fair, with trust and prayer,
  As Peace and Love they rise.
Straightway provide a welcome wide,
  Nor wonder why they came;
They stand outside our hearts and bide,
  Knocking in Jesus' name.

—*The Christian Life.*

THOUGHTS FOR CHRISTMAS DAY.

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith!"—EPH. iii. 17.

"Christ dwelling in the heart." Ah, that is the place of honor!

It is something to have a place in your friend's portrait gallery, even if it be only in that little square album of photographs; but you may have that without having much real place in his heart.

It is something to have a place in the memory of a whole city,—for the statesman or the philanthropist to have his statue set up in marble or bronze where generations may gaze at it, and tell to aftertimes of noble service and fame. But a man may have such a place in a great public square, and yet not have much real place in men's hearts, while on the other hand many of those who have the tenderest place in men's hearts have not been of the kind to whom men put up statues.

I suppose Christ has been honored in both these ways, and, indeed, in about all the ways that are possible; for the old word, of his appearing at last in "great power and glory," came true after a while, though it seemed little enough likely to do when it was first spoken. Christ has been set on a pinnacle of glory in the earth higher than any throne of king or emperor. Men have made pictures of him, and statues; have built churches to him, and grand cathedrals; have called great institutions after him; have enshrined his image in a thousand times ten thousand temples. No pomp or grandeur of the world but has done him honor. And yet do you think he cares very much about that kind of honor? I think he cares more, infinitely more, for the place in men's hearts, the loving thoughts which make men kinder to each other for his sake, and which make even little chil-

Those who offer books frequently receive notes, saying, "Shall I return you this book, or keep it, or pass it on?" *Unless otherwise stated*, all books offered in this department are *given*, and the postage paid.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "*Shall* I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it: else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you *have* sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed there.

Please write only on one side of the paper in sending lists or letters to the secretary.

OFFERS.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 71 Newbury Street, Boston, Mass.?

The Cambridge Branch offers the following books. Address Miss M. A. Vinal, 20 Lowell Street, Cambridge, Mass.

Educational.

"History of Rome," Liddell; "History of the Roman People," Allen; "Through Magic Glasses," Buckley; "History of Greece," Fyffe; "Moths and Butterflies"; "Pronouncing Musical Dictionary"; "Common Objects of the Seashore"; "Comprehensive Physiology"; "Our Bodies, and How We Live"; "History of the Romans," Horton; "Mediæval Europe"; "General History," Sheldon; "History of the United States," Quackenbos; "History of the United States," Johnston; Sargent's "Standard Fifth Reader"; Monroe's "Third Reader"; Worcester's "Spelling Book"; "Handbook of Poetics"; Schiller's Works in German (six volumes).

Juvenile.

"The Boys of '61," Carleton; "Pussy Tiptoes"; "Our Children's Songs"; "Little Dignity"; "Neal, the Miller"; Scott's "Tales of a Grandfather"; "Leslie Goldthwaite"; "Queechy"; "Stories from Old English Poetry"; "Evenings at Home"; "Ting-a-Ling"; "Boston Town," H. E. Scudder; "Eric; or, Little by Little," Farrar; "The Greek Heroes," Kingsley; "Hymns and Rhymes for Home and School"; "Polly Cologne"; *St. Nicholas*, 1885 and 1887.

The following books are offered by the Second Church Branch, Salem. Address Miss Decker, 4 Mount Vernon Street, Salem, Mass. First requests will please contain reference. "A Catechism of Liberal Faith," C. F. Dole; "Beginnings of Christianity" (twenty lessons), E. A. Horton; "Italian Scenes and Stories"; "The Still Hour," Austin Phelps; "Cousin Lucy," Jacob Abbott; "Long Look House," Edward Abbott; "Dialogues from Dickens"; "Cat and Dog"; "The Japanese in America"; "American Union Speaker," Philbrick; "The Practical Phrenologist," O. S. Fowler; "Glass Making"; "Wonders of Heat"; "Bottom of the Sea"; "Strength and Skill"; *Munsey's Magazines* for 1902; *Scribner's Magazines* for 1903; *Ladies' Home Journal*, first six months, 1903; music, vocal and instrumental.

REQUESTS.

[*Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.*]

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.) 6. Do not send matter for the Book Club to Miss Clarke, but to Mrs. Nichols, the Book Club Secretary.

Those who write to us for the first time must send the name and address of a minister as a reference. Without that the request will not be printed.

I come, after a long absence from the circle, asking for reading. Have you "Nathaniel Hawthorne and His Wife" and "A Living Faith"? If not, send me any good books you have. I have none you advertise. I will be very thankful for them. Yours I. H. N. Carrie Wilder Hance, Sodus, Wayne County, New York.

Willie J. Davis, Shiloh, New Jersey, twelve years of age, will be glad of suitable reading.

Through the kindness of some friend your little magazine reaches me now and then, and it does indeed bring cheer to us on our lonely ranch away out here in the

wilds of Washington. When we are settled for the winter, we will be fourteen miles from the post-office and alone,—"we" being two women and one little girl. The snow has already fallen on the mountains: in fact, we see the snow all summer long, and it tempers the summer heat and makes the nights so cool and pleasant. I have received papers, magazines, and a few letters and books from *Cheerful Letter* friends, and I wish to thank each one for her kindness. The snow falls very deep, and when it comes we will be shut in, and the time will pass slowly and wearily. Our mail will be brought the first nine miles on its way toward us by a friend, then in some way we hope it will reach us at least once in two weeks, and it will be the bright spot in the shades and snows of winter. Washington is delightful in summer, with its grand scenery and the flock of wild geese overhead and the pretty lakes with wild ducks swimming in the blue waters. Now, dear, kind friends, whose chosen mission it seems to be to cheer and comfort the isolated ones, a magazine, book, letter, anything to cause a ripple in the monotony of the coming winter, will be most thankfully received. We have no church, no school, not even a store, nearer than ten miles, and no near neighbors. I scatter reading matter among my neighbors who have but little of their own, and they are grateful for it. May God bless you all. Mrs. A. C. Earl, Leahy, Douglas County, Washington.

I thank those who have sent me reading matter in the past, as it was greatly appreciated; and I would accept it as a great favor if some one would send me *Vickery's Fireside Visitor* of 1898 and 1899, and the "English Orphans," "Meadow Brook," and "Glen's Creek," by Mrs. Mary J. Holmes, and "He fell in Love with his Wife," "Barriers Burned Away," "Opening a Chestnut Burr," and "A Young Girl's Wooing," by E. P. Roe. Address Miss Cleo Shortt, Floyd, R. F. D., No. 1, Virginia.

Jennie L. Pleasants, Experiment, Virginia, thanks all who have sent her reading in the past, and asks to be remembered through the winter.

I should be very glad indeed to become a member of your society, to have a cheerful correspondent, and to receive literature. My home is in a remote part of Patrick County, Virginia, not near any town or railroad. My husband is a farmer, and has but little to spend for books; but we are both fond of good reading, and will appreciate magazines, papers, or books. Mrs. Annie Wright, Dodson, Virginia.

Mrs. Jennie Ager, Dobyn, Virginia, asks for a first reader and spelling-book.

Mrs. Mary Hall, Dobyn, Virginia, asks for Johnson's "Second Reader" or picture book for her little girl of four years.

Mrs. T. F. Satterfield, Mount Airy, North Carolina, would be glad to receive reading suitable for two girls, fifteen and nine years, and boy, eighteen years of age.

I want to thank the Cheerful Letter Club for a few good books, but take this medium of asking for more, such as will suit a girl of eighteen. I am going to school. I would like to have "Little Women," "Little Men," and "Jo's Boys," by Miss Alcott, and also any of Dickens's works. Miss J. B. Nolley Arlington, Tennessee.

Mrs. Susie C. Tinder, Casby, Orange County, Virginia, will be glad to receive anything for herself or four little children, three boys and one little girl.

Lucy Greer, Yadkin Valley, Caldwell County, North Carolina, asks for any reading, which she will pass along after reading.

Mrs. M. L. Stricklin, Waco, Texas, asks for a dictionary and any reading.

Miss Angie Hicks, Windom, Yancy County, North Carolina, asks for pictures or papers suitable for children.

Mrs. Arminta Clark, Bowie, Texas, will be grateful for any books or magazines.

Mrs. Laura Vaughn, Blue Jacket, Indian Territory, formerly from Centralia, will be very grateful for all reading sent, and will pass it on to others.

Six months has passed since I first wrote to the *Cheerful Letter*. I received one book and some papers, but have not received anything since. I am going to school three miles from home, but I am not able to get

all the books that I want. Would some one be so kind as to send me Cutter's "Physiology" and a rhetoric? I would like very much to receive any good reading, also the *Delineator*. I would like to correspond with some of the *Cheerful Letter* friends near my age. I am fifteen. My address is Madgie Grant, Pearch, Bedford County, Virginia.

Will you please remember me when sending out literature this winter? I am seventeen years old and just recovering from a severe attack of typhoid fever. First my father was taken, then my younger brother, my mother, and I, later my older sister and brother, until six of us were sick at one time. The extra expense caused by so much sickness will render us unable to take even a newspaper; and, much as I would like to have a cheerful correspondent, I cannot afford the postage. (Miss) Gertrude E. Pedigo, Vinton, Virginia.

I wish to thank you for the reading I have been receiving, and wish a continuance of same. I also wish you to send reading matter to three fatherless children of my neighborhood. Their father was a Methodist preacher, who died several years ago, leaving them dependent upon their mother, who is not able to buy them reading matter. They dearly love to read. You can address reading to the oldest, a boy of fifteen, whose address is Traynham Pike, Shuff, Virginia. Yours truly, Mrs. Mary Wood, Shuff, Virginia.

School will begin about the middle of October, and my children need three schoolbooks, and I am not able to get them. They are "Lippincott's Comprehensive Physiology," by Cutter; Lee's "Brief History of the United States"; and Maury's "Manual of Geography." I would be so glad to get them, no matter how much they have been used. I have been drying some apples to try and get the children some clothes, but it is slow work. I can't get but three cents a pound, and I have all my other work to do. I haven't heard from any of the *Cheerful Letter* for a long time. Mrs. Mary L. Brown, Nettle Ridge, Patrick County, Virginia.

Mrs. Emma E. Corns asks for a "Fifth Reader," a "Second Reader," a Dictionary, and a History of the United States. Her address is Nettle Ridge, Virginia, R. F. D. No. 1.

Miss Kate R. Shelton, Jewel, Stokes County, North Carolina, nineteen years old, asks for a history of the United States and any books or magazines.

Mrs. Cattie Kindrick, Shuff, Patrick County, Virginia, asks for a Stickney's "Third Reader," Merrill's "Spelling Book," and Johnson's "First Reader." Also good reading of any kind.

Changes of Address.

Mrs. Anna M. Hausberry, from Mohawk, Oregon, to Douglas, Morrow County, Oregon (Freight Office, Arlington, Oregon).

Mrs. Mattie Alger, from Marcola, Oregon, to Reardon, Oregon.

Mrs. Mary V. Doss, from Palmetto, Virginia, to Nettle Ridge, Virginia, R. F. D., No. 1.

Miss Virda Shelton, formerly of Vinton, Virginia, is now Mrs. Virda Pedigo, Sewell, West Virginia.

Mrs. M. L. Grant, from Hardy, Texas, to Goodwell, Oklahoma.

Mrs. Evalee Meek, from Texas to Goodwell, Oklahoma.

The present address of Mrs. George Cecil, is Norton, Kansas; of Mrs. L. B. Hethcock, Malvern, Hot Spring County, Arkansas; of Glen Mulford, Harrison, Boone County, Arkansas.

We should like to receive the present address of Mrs. Sallie Jones, formerly of Clayton, Montgomery County, Ohio.

Mrs. Emma Hudson, Fayetteville, Tennessee, is now Mrs. Joel Parks, Fayetteville, Tennessee.

We are sorry to hear of the death of two of our friends of many years,—Mrs. C. E. Terry, Speonk, New York, and Mrs. E. A. Goodell, Avon Park, Florida. Mrs. Goodell died the latter part of September, but the information did not reach us in time for insertion in our October number. Her husband writes: "God bless you, dear Mrs. C., for your kindness. What should we have

done without your help? I believe she is beyond want; but she would bless you still, if she could, for your kindness and friendship."

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

JUNO'S LOST SHEEP RECOVERED (*continued*).

It was a little curious that it was Oliver and not Dick that Juno found waiting at the door of the school-room; for Oliver had declared that he would not go, while Dick had said that he would go. Oliver, on reflecting on the subject afterward, had concluded that, since Dick was not afraid of being made to go into the school if he went to the door, there was no occasion for him to be afraid Dick, in reconsidering the subject, had concluded that there might be something in what Oliver had said, and so he had determined that on the whole he would not go.

Pompling had given the message about the rewards to both Trip and Sally Lane. Trip concluded on the whole that he would come for his apple; but Sally Lane, either not caring much about apples, or else not really believing that she would get one, did not come.

"Ah, children!" said Juno, as she came up to the door, "I am very glad to see so many of you here. I expect I shall have a very good class to-day. I had a very good class last Sunday. There were only three wrong things done. Three of the scholars went away before the school was dismissed, and that was very wrong in them. But I don't believe that any will go away to-day."

"I have brought something curious to-day to show to you all," she continued. "I am going to show it to Oliver here at the door, because I promised him I would; and then he can go away. I shall show it to the rest of you in school, after the lessons."

"On the whole," she continued, "I believe I will show it to you twice,—once before the lessons and then again a second time, all around, after the lessons. You will have more time to see it, too, in the school-room than I could spare here; but Oliver may see it here."

[Juno had brought a kaleidoscope to show the children.]

So saying, Juno held the kaleidoscope to Oliver's right eye, while she put her finger upon the lid of his left eye so as to keep that one shut. Oliver, as soon as he caught a view of the beautiful configurations within, uttered a long exclamation of delight.

"Let me see!" "Let me see!" exclaimed the other children, all in one voice.

"Yes," said Juno, "as soon as we go upstairs. Run up the stairs now as fast as you can."

So Juno, taking the kaleidoscope away from Oliver's eye, began to follow her scholars upstairs. Oliver remained at the bottom of the stairs, seemingly uncertain what to do.

"You can come if you choose, Oliver," said Juno. "Indeed, I should be very glad to have you come. Only I won't try to make you come, because the bargain I made with you was to show you the curious thing at the door and not make you come in."

Oliver hung his head and looked as if he did not know exactly what to do, and so Juno went on.

As soon as she had entered the school-room, she directed her scholars to take their seats, and then she let them all see the kaleidoscope in turn, allowing each one to look through it for one minute,—as nearly as she could guess at the time, for she had not any watch.

Then she told them that it was time for the school to begin, and so she went through with the exercises, much as she had done on the previous Sunday.

In a few minutes, as she happened to turn her eye toward the door, she saw Oliver there, peeping in. She did not stop in what she was saying, but beckoned with her hand and pointed to a seat. Oliver came in and took his seat, and so now Juno had five of her scholars, all in their places and behaving well. These were all but two that belonged to the school.

After Juno had finished the lessons, she showed the children the kaleidoscope again, all round, twice. They were all, of course, greatly pleased with it. Then, after distributing the rewards as she had promised, she dismissed the scholars, inviting them all as they went away to come next Sunday afternoon.

I ought perhaps to say that Juno had for a time some little doubt about the propriety

of carrying a kaleidoscope to school to show children on Sunday. But on reflection she considered that since God displays every Sunday, before the eyes of all the world, the blue skies, the green fields, the blooming flowers, and the thousand other beauties of nature which he has made for the enjoyment and instruction of man, there could not be any objection to her showing the colors of the kaleidoscope on that day to her little scholars, if it would tend to please them and make them happy, and also make them like better to come to her Sunday-school.—*Jacob Abbott.*

(*To be continued.*)

NATURAL HISTORY.

ANIMAL SURGERY.

Here are a few incidents, out of a score or more that I have seen or heard from reliable hunters, that indicate something more than native instinct among animals. When I turn to the birds, the incidents are fewer, but more remarkable; for the birds, being lower in the scale of life, are more subject to instinct than are the animals, and so are less easily taught by their mothers, and are slower to change their natural habits to meet changing conditions.

This is, of course, a very general statement, and is subject to endless exceptions. The finches that, when transported to Australia from England, changed the style of their nests radically, and now build in a fashion entirely different from that of their parents; the little goldfinch of New England that will build a false bottom to her nest to cover up the egg of a cowbird that has been left to hatch among her own; the grouse that near the dwellings of men are so much wilder and keener than their brethren of the wilderness; the swallows that adopt the chimneys and barns of civilization instead of the hollow trees and clay blanks of their native woods,—all these and a score of others show how readily instinct is modified among the birds, and how the young are taught a wisdom that their forefathers never knew. Nevertheless, it is true, I think, that instincts are generally sharper with them than with animals, and the following cases suggest all the more strongly that we must look beyond instinct to training and individual discovery to account for many things among the feathered folk.

One day in the early spring I saw two eider-ducks swimming about the Hummock Pond on the island of Nantucket. The keen-eyed critic will interfere here and say I was mistaken; for eiders are salt-water ducks that love the open sea and are supposed never to enter fresh water, not even to breed. That is what I also supposed until I saw these two, so I sat down to watch a while and find out, if possible, what had caused them to change their habits. At this time of year the birds are almost invariably found in pairs, and sometimes a flock a hundred yards long will pass you, flying close to the water and sweeping around the point where you are watching, first a pretty brown female and then a gorgeous black and white drake just behind her, alternating with perfect regularity, female and male, throughout the whole length of the long line. The two birds before me, however, were both females, and that was another reason for watching them instead of the hundreds of other ducks, coots and sheldrakes and broadbills, that were scattered all over the pig pond.

The first thing noticed was that the birds were acting queerly, dipping their heads under water and keeping them there for a full minute or more at a time. That was curious, too; for the water under them was too deep for feeding, and the eiders prefer to wait till the tide falls and then gather the exposed shellfish from the rocks rather than to dive after them, like a coot. Darkness came on speedily to hide the birds, who were still dipping their heads as if bewitched, and I went away no wiser for my watching.

A few weeks later there was another eider, a big drake, in the same pond, and acting in the same queer way. Thinking perhaps that this was a wounded bird that had gone crazy from a shot in the head, I pushed out after him in an old tub of a boat; but he took wing at my approach like any other duck, and after a vigorous flight lit farther down the pond and plunged his head under water again. Thoroughly curious now, I went on a still hunt after the stranger, and after much difficulty succeeded in shooting him from the end of a bushy point. The only unusual thing about him was that a large mussel, such as grow on the rocks in salt water, had closed his shells firmly on

the bird's tongue in such a way that he could neither be crushed by the bird's bill nor scratched off by the bird's foot. I pulled the mussel off, put it in my pocket, and went home more mystified than before.

That night I hunted up an old fisherman, who had a big store of information in his head about all kinds of wild things, and asked him if he had ever seen a shoal duck in fresh water. "Once or twice," he said. "They kept dipping their heads under water, kinder crazy like." But he had no explanation to offer until I showed him the mussel that I had found on the duck's tongue. Then his face lightened. "Mussels of that kind won't live in fresh water," he declared at a glance; and then the explanation of the birds' queer actions flashed into both heads at once. They were simply drowning the mussels in order to make them loosen their grip on the birds' tongues.

This is undoubtedly the true explanation, as I made sure by testing the mussels in fresh water and by watching the birds more closely at their feeding. All winter they may be found along our coasts, where they feed on the small shellfish that cover the ledges. As the tide goes down they swim in from the shoals, where they rest in scattered flocks, and chip the mussels from the ledges, swallowing them, shells and all. A score of times I have hidden among the rocks of the jetty with a few wooden decoys in front of me and watched the eiders come in to feed. They would approach the decoys rapidly, lifting their wings repeatedly as a kind of salutation: then, angered apparently that they were not welcomed by the same signal of uplifted wings, they would swim up to the wooden frauds and peck them savagely here and there, and then leave them in disgust and scatter among the rocks at my feet, paying little attention to me as long as I kept perfectly still. For they are much tamer than other wild ducks, and are, unfortunately, slow to believe that man is their enemy.

I noticed another curious thing while watching them and hoping that by some chance I might see one caught by a mussel. When a flock was passing high overhead, any sudden noise—a shout or the near report of a gun—would make the whole flock swoop down like a flash close to the water. Plover have the same habit when they first arrive from Labrador; but I have hunted in vain for any satisfactory explanation of the thing.

As the birds feed, a mussel will sometimes close his shells hard on some careless duck's tongue or bill in such a way that he cannot be crushed or swallowed or broken against the rocks. In that case the bird, if he knows the secret, will fly to fresh water and drown his tormentor. Whether all the ducks have this wisdom, or whether it is confined to a few rare birds, there is no present means of knowing. I have seen three different eiders practise this bit of surgery myself, and have heard of at least a dozen more, all of the same species, that were seen in fresh ponds or rivers dipping their heads under water repeatedly. In either case two interesting questions suggest themselves. First, how did a bird, whose whole life from birth to death is spent on the sea, first learn that certain mussels will drown in fresh water? and, second, how do the other birds know it now when the need arises unexpectedly?

There is one other bit of bird surgery, more wonderful still, that opens up a wider field for speculation. Twenty years ago, while sitting quietly by a brook at the edge of the woods in Bridgewater, Mass, a woodcock fluttered out into the open, and made his way to a spot on the bank where a light streak of clay showed clearly from where I was watching. It was the early hunting season, when gunners were abroad in the land, and my first impression was that this was a wounded bird that had made a long flight after being shot at, and that had now come out to the stream to drink or to bathe his wound, as birds often do. Whether this was so or not is a matter of guess-work; but the bird was acting strangely in broad daylight, and I crept nearer, till I could see him plainly on the other side of the little stream, though he was still too far away for me to be absolutely sure of what all his motions meant.

At first he took soft clay in his bill from the edge of the water and seemed to be smearing it on one leg near the knee. Then he fluttered away on one foot for a distance and seemed to be pulling tiny roots and fibres of grass, which he worked into the clay that he had already smeared on his leg. Again he took more clay and plastered it over the fibres, putting on more and more

till I could plainly see the enlargement. He worked away with strange, silent intentness for fully fifteen minutes, while I watched and wondered, scarce believing my eyes. Then he stood perfectly still for a full hour under an overhanging sod, where the eye could with difficulty find him, his only motion, meanwhile, being an occasional rubbing and smoothing of the clay bandage with his bill, until it hardened enough to suit him, whereupon he fluttered away from the brook and disappeared in the thick woods.

I had my own explanation of the incredible action; namely, that the woodcock had a broken leg, and had deliberately put it into a clay cast to hold the broken bones in place until they should knit together again; but, naturally, I kept my own counsel, knowing that no one would believe in the theory. For years I questioned gunners closely, and found two who said that they had killed woodcock whose legs had at one time been broken and had healed again. As far as they could remember, the leg had in each case healed perfectly straight instead of twisting to one side, as a chicken's leg does when broken and allowed to knit of itself. I examined hundreds of woodcock in the markets in different localities, and found one whose leg had at one time been broken by a shot and then had healed perfectly. There were plain signs of dried mud at the break; but that was also true of the other leg near the foot, which only indicated that the bird had been feeding in soft places.

All this proved nothing to an outsider, and I kept silence as to what I had seen until last winter, twenty years afterward, when the confirmation came unexpectedly. I had been speaking of animals before the Contemporary Club of Bridgeport when a gentleman, a lawyer well known all over the State, came to me and told me eagerly of a curious find he had made the previous autumn. He was gunning one day with a friend, when they shot a woodcock, which on being brought in by the dog was found to have a lump of hard clay on one of its legs. Curious to know what it meant, he chipped the clay off with his penknife and found a broken bone, which was then almost healed and as straight as ever. A few weeks later the bird, had he lived, would undoubtedly have taken off the cast himself by first soaking it in water, and there would have been nothing to indicate anything unusual about him.

So I give the observation now, at last, since proof is at hand, not to indicate a new or old habit of woodcock,—for how far the strange knowledge is spread among the wading birds no man can say,—but simply to indicate how little we know of the inner life of all wild birds and animals, and how much there is yet to be discovered when we shall lay aside the gun for the field-glass, and learn to interpret the wonderful life which goes on unseen all about us.—*William J. Long, in Outlook.*

THE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.

(*Continued from November number.*)

Familiarity with the modern and scientific treatment of the insane is apt to make us forget that it is of quite recent birth, and that within the memory of many now living it would have been thought the wildest madness to dream of dealing with these afflicted beings otherwise than as with the most dangerous animals.

From the time of which we have just spoken (1828), these men of science and philanthropy, working hard to bring about a better state of things, found in Lord Ashley an ardent sympathizer and an earnest coworker.

The state of pauper lunatics in London was brought before the House of Commons in June, 1827, by Mr. Robert Gordon, and a report was issued by the Committee of Inquiry that had been appointed, revealing many shocking defects and abuses. On the 19th of February, 1828, Mr. Gordon moved for leave to bring in "A Bill to Amend the Law for the Regulation of Lunatic Asylums," and pointed out instances of illegal detention and coercion of sane persons, and of gross neglect and cruelty to unfortunate lunatics. He showed that the Commissioners of the College of Physicians had omitted to carry out inspections as the law directed, on the ground that they had no power to follow up their discoveries.

Lord Ashley seconded the motion, but Hansard asserts that "his lordship spoke in so low a tone that he was nearly inaudible in the gallery. He alluded to the evidence given before the committee to prove that it

was highly necessary that something should be done relative to the treatment of pauper lunatics, and he cited several cases that had come within his own knowledge which clearly proved that the existing system was greatly defective."

This was his first important speech in Parliament, and it was on behalf of the most unfortunate, the most wretched, and the most ill-treated of his fellow-creatures. In it he sounded the key-note of his whole Parliamentary career. He stood forth as the friend of the friendless, the helper of the oppressed, and from that day forward his whole life was devoted to the great interests of humanity.

In his Diary Lord Ashley briefly alludes to his first speech in these terms:—

"*February* 20.—Last night I ventured to speak, and, God be praised, I did not utterly disgrace myself, though the exhibition was far from glorious; but the subject was upon lunatic asylums,—a mere matter of plain business, and requiring simplicity alone, with common sense. Gordon had requested me to second his motion. Having sat on the committee and having felt unusual sympathy for those whom the bill is intended to protect, I did not decline, more especially as I had heard that from certain circumstances my support in this affair would render some small service to the cause. And so, by God's blessing, my first effort has been for the advancement of human happiness. May I improve hourly!"

The bill, of which the principal features were the transfer of powers from the College of Physicians to fifteen metropolitan commissioners appointed by the home secretary, and the requirement of two medical certificates for private patients, was passed on July 15, 1828. Of the new commissioners Lord Ashley was one. In the following year he became chairman of the commission, and continued in that office till his death,—a period of fifty-seven years,—his great interest in the welfare of the insane having been sustained throughout that long period with unflagging energy.

The condition of the lunatic population still left very much to be desired, and further attempts at improvement were made; but nothing of striking importance was accomplished for several years. During this period, however, Lord Ashley was not idle. He did not leave a stone unturned which could be of assistance to the contemplated reform: he visited the asylums in many parts of London and the provinces, and saw the filthy condition, the horrible attendant circumstances, the misery and degradation of the inmates. He saw for himself that the lunatics were chained to their beds, and left from Saturday afternoon to Monday without attendance, and with only bread and water within their reach; he saw the nature of the barbarities that were committed upon the helpless sufferers; he saw that the violent and the quiet, the clean and the uncleanly, were shut up together in foul and disgusting cells, damp, dark, and unwholesome. But what astonished him more than anything else was that people knew and cared absolutely nothing about this state of things, and that it was with the greatest difficulty he could obtain from any outside source an opinion or a fact. So shocked and horrified was he with the revelation of misery and cruelty—almost incredible in these days when lunatic asylums are models of cleanliness and of wise and humane treatment—that he vowed he would never cease pleading the cause of these poor creatures till either death silenced him or the laws were amended. And, as we shall see, he kept his vow.

Meanwhile, another and vaster subject was looming before him,—the great question of factory legislation.

It was an ambition with Lord Ashley to distinguish himself in literature, and his mental accomplishments were such that there is no doubt he would have made his mark as a man of letters. But circumstances again and again opposed him, until as he said, do what he would he could not resist the influences which drew him to another career.

"*April* 28.—My twenty-seventh birthday. Temporal advantages have increased upon me. I hope that others have felt my bettered state. But I look around now from a higher pinnacle, and behold what mighty interests are intrusted to my care. India, with her hundred millions, is the compass of my mind's survey, and it is almost possible that some happiness or misery may depend upon my principle and vigilance. Can God, in his store of worldly exaltations, confer a greater than this sublime

guardianship of countless myriads,—to advance their temporal welfare, open their understandings, fire their souls, and, by leading them prudently to a knowledge of religion, work out our own immortality by desiring theirs? This is absurd, I fear. I am not the principal; but, like Terentius Varro, let nations thank me because 'I have not despaired of the republic.' How one is led away! Visions of glory possess my brain by day and by night; but prudence, the sole guide of truth and lasting success, is cold and measured in her views. God's will be done! Somehow or other I have gained credit as a man of business. Never was man more friendly, more kind, than the duke to me. He has given me this situation as the most instructive and important. Next year I must stand forward as the oracle of India, the strength or weakness of the government in this division of its energies. I shall wake but in vain unless God give me his aid. I have acquired, I think, some temper, some knowledge of mankind, some true philosophy, and a more enlarged view of things, but cannot withstand despondency. I cannot resolve to quit public life: I may not. Surely there is some vanity at the root of all this,—vanity, that bane of what is really good. Wrote two prayers. Now let me consider a while my future career. The first principle, God's honor; the second, man's happiness; the means, prayer and unremitting diligence. All petty love of excellence must be put aside, the matter must be studied, the motives refined, and one's best done for the remainder. No fretting of the mind. No conceited nervousness for fear some sentence should fail in arrangement, some point in fitness, some attempt at display be found presumption. I must not dread coming down to the level of others. If I am already there, the descent is nothing; and why be desirous of appearing greater when that illusion can be maintained by silence alone?—and that silence I must break. This is the hardest scheme I ever devised,—to come forward at once and show myself no cleverer than others. Yet it is the wisest if I could but follow it. I must think of my duties and the subject I have to uphold. If I stop to compare myself with others, either vanity overweening will rush in or else a cruel despondency, arising equally from conceit, but differing in its mode of influence. Oh, what wisdom and power in this saying, 'Do what is right, and trust to Providence for the rest.' My charities are not sufficiently extended. I must methodize them as soon as my debts shall be arranged and I have time to look around. I will begin afresh. One good thing has been done in getting William a dwelling-place in my house. He attends more to business, is far happier, and will, I now hope, lay up a stock of real fruit for after years."

(To be continued.)

LETTERS OF A SISTER.

To A. F. C.

BOSTON, July 14, 1832.

My Dear Brother,—I suppose you would like to hear a little news of home. As usual there does not seem to be any, though if I should write everything it would seem a great deal to you. Our citizens are in momentary dread of cholera. I suppose it will not take more than two or three weeks to settle it finally. It is now raging in New York, though not so violently as it has in other places,—Montreal, for example. We are prepared with hospitals, etc., against the attack. All the ministers have preached about it to endeavor to instil courage into the minds of their congregations, and also to impress upon their minds the necessity of keeping clean. Mr. Greenwood as usual shone upon the occasion, and managed even so delicate a matter as telling the people to wash their hands and faces, with address and grace. He personified the cholera as the "sad and swift angel of death which had passed over the ocean and alighted near us,"—a contrast to which was heard in the sermon of Mr. Taylor* on the same occasion to his congregation of sailors. He said, after exhorting them to be clean and pure, that they must be so in order to avoid that "loathsome demon, which had been permitted to set his unwashed feet upon our land." I do not know whether you have ever heard of Mr. Taylor, and yet I think I wrote you a description of him. If not, let me know and I will: you ought to know something of that newly risen star.

*The celebrated Father Taylor.

Perhaps by this time you have gone off to fight the Indians. You should tell us about those public matters if you have no private ones to communicate.

Also about the inundations, etc., of which we read so much in the papers. What an idea that you and William should go a-fishing on the Mississippi River! I never heard anything to equal it in my life. I am almost sorry that William mentioned it, for I shall constantly figure to myself that you and he are just in the act of being overset by a squall and precipitated to the bottom of that rearing deep among the snags and other ugly things.

We intended to send you some books and other matters, but Mr. Savage thinks he cannot take anything but letters. I think he might, but as he has refused we cannot insist upon it. However, William mentions that a box is going from Henshaw's to Mr. Holton, and that we can put some things in that. Mother and myself propose to spend the rest of the summer at Newton.

I must send the letters now, and therefore cannot fill them up with any more nonsense. Yours ever,

SARAH.

To W. H. C.

MAY 15, 1833.

Dear William,—If you have seen any late Boston papers, you must have learned that all hearts and hands have been engaged the last two months in the cause of the blind. Dr. Howe, by the magic of his enthusiasm and generous spirit, together with a most enlightened philanthropy, has conjured up for that much neglected class of sufferers a splendid house for an asylum, a blind teacher from Paris, who, instead of leading them into a ditch, makes the rough places of learning smooth for them, and turns their darkness into light. Also, he has obtained $50,000 as a fund for their support. He first went to France by request of the Society for assisting the Blind, which consisted of a few individuals without resources or experience, or anything but faith. He visited the French institution, and brought away a regularly educated teacher, blind from his birth. When he arrived, the society had obtained by subscription a small sum of money. He scoured the country, and picked up all the blind children that he could afford to undertake; gave a room in his own house, and took them all in. In the course of four months they had nearly all learned to read with their books of raised letters, learned a great deal of geography by their maps with raised outlines. By another contrivance they had learned arithmetic and geometry by having the problems printed in raised lines. The boys weave mats and baskets, and the girls sew and some learn music, and all sing. Thus they are all interested and happy; feel no longer helpless, but as independent as their neighbors, since they can become useful citizens and conquer that terrible circumstance of blindness. When he had caused them to learn enough to prove all this, he gave several exhibitions of their accomplishments, by which he obtained some money. A fair was instituted in Salem, at which they obtained $3,000; another in Boston; and by this time, the whole town being interested, every woman and child worked like beavers for six weeks; every shop-keeper gave all his odds and ends, and sometimes much more, as materials. (Some excesses in the begging line were committed.)

When the day of the fair approached, Faneuil Hall was seized upon and decorated profusely with evergreens and flowers and singing birds and a Maypole in the midst. It happened the 1st of May. Our gay neighbor, Mrs. O., had a table, and sold twice as much as any other. She made $2,000 at her table. Mrs. Everett had a double table and many people to assist, and likewise obtained $2,000. Various others of less note displayed themselves in the cause of charity. First among these was Miss Cornelia W. She is, you know, a showy-looking girl, like a wax figure; and she was seated in a bower, and sold flowers and fates.

. . . . . .

The girls went round attacking all the gentlemen and shop-keepers, and even the apothecaries did not escape. They would accept assafœtida and sell it again. One gentleman gave a caldron of coal and another a cask of good wine.

Your sister had the pleasure of contributing about $50 in the shape of pictures, portfolios, etc. She painted a blind boy reading in his blind book, which sold for $30; two ornamented portfolios, which were $5 each; a drawing in pencil, which was an

original design, $5; and a pair of screens, $5 more. Mrs. O. sold the picture, and it was well she had it, as I fear no less vigorous and assiduous saleswoman would have made so much of it. A gentleman went up to Mrs. O.'s table, and, after gazing at her for some minutes, laid down $10, when she, of course, pounced upon it, and asked him what he would have in return. He replied, "Nothing more, madam: I came to look at you," and walked off. A. was stationed by her side to knock down anybody who should need such a hint.

A week before the fair Colonel Perkins announced his intention of giving his house in Pearl Street for the asylum for the blind, upon condition that $50,000 should be raised before the end of May to support them in it. They have, I believe, made it up. The fair produced $12,000. Dr. Howe is beside himself with delight, it is said. James has translated a little German story, of which he gave a dozen copies to the fair. Miss Peabody wrote ever so many little books in manuscript, and had them tied up in card-paper covers, with painted figures on the outside.

Before the end of the fourth day the girls who were behind the table became perfectly wild, and ran round the room with their goods suspended to their wands. I think there will be no more fairs in Boston.

I wish you had been here last evening to see my tableaux. They were beautiful. First, I had an imitation of a picture by Teniers, called "The Alchemist." It represents an alchemist in his laboratory, seated by a table where all sorts of chemical apparatus is seen, stirring a crucible with one hand and holding a book in the other, out of which he reads intently. The second was "Brutus and Portia." Brutus was James, dressed in perfect Roman costume, and Anna Curtis draped in white muslin, with a tiara on her head. That was very fine. The most beautiful of all was "The Robbers' Cave." James *en brigand*, and Belinda R. *en brigande*, and our little Thomas asleep with his head on her lap and his hand on his father's sword, he and she looking down at the child. We had besides "The Dull Lecture," by Newton; "Anne Page, Slender and Shallow"; "The Bride of Triermain," and two or three others. They gave infinite satisfaction and delight James invented some lamps for the occasion which succeeded to a charm.

(*To be continued.*)

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN

I.

In waist, not in shirt;
In clean, not in dirt;
In song, not in hymn;
In John, but not in Tim;
In Jim, not in Joe;
In hand, not in toe;
In dog, not in plough;
In look, not in see;
In honey, not in Lee;
My whole is a man
Who was great and good,
And to save this country
Did all he could.

II.

A thrifty lady, in a dress of (town in New South Wales) and carrying (one of the Sunda Islands) fan, went out to buy a new set of (an empire in Asia). She had a desire to shine in (islands in the Pacific), and sent for her (mountain in Oregon), (a city in Idaho), (a city in Georgia), and (a city in Illinois), to aid in her selection. Having bought some delicate cups and saucers from (a beautiful city in France), she bought plates from (a city in Prussia) and carved plates from (mountains in Switzerland). She proceeded to order a supper. She bought (vegetable from Minnesota), (fruit from Spain and Italy), fish from the Mediterranean, and many other things. Lighting her saloon, she found the (town in the north of Scotland) and the candles troublesome. She called her servant (mountain in Scotland), and ordered him to bring her oil from (the sea on the east side of Siberia). Her carpets were (a city in Belgium), her perfumes came from (a city on the Rhine), her curtains from (a town on the Trent), her coal from (a town on the Tyne), and her knives and forks from (two busy manufacturing towns in England).

III.

1. Behead an animal and get something for a boat: curtail and get a serpent.

2. Behead a conflagration and get anger: curtail and get a tree.

3. Behead a personal pronoun and get a personal pronoun: curtail and get another.

4. Behead a coin and get a large boat: curtail and get to injure.

5. Behead a part of a verb and get a numeral adjective: curtail and get another verb.

IV.

I am a proverb familiar to every one, and am composed of 20 letters.

My 1, 2, 10, 4, 12, 6, is a reply.
My 19, 6, 9, is a part of the body.
My 15, 20, 8, 11, is an element.
My 14, 17, 19, 20, 3, is a tool.
My 5, 13, 18, is an insect.
My 16, 7, 1, 17, is an ore.

Answers to Puzzles in November Number.

I. *Charade.*—Eyelash.

II. *Mathematical Puzzle.*—Mild.

III. *Shaksperian Acrostic.*—Macbeth and Othello.

*M*ercutio.
*A*s You Like I*t*.
*C*ardinal Pandulp*h*.
*B*eatrice.
*E*ar*l*.
*T*uba*l*.
*H*oratio.

IV. *Metagram.*

1. Whack.
2. Hack.
3. Jack
4. Lack.
5. Pack.
6. Mack.
7. Tack.
8. Sack.
9. Back.
10. Zack.
11. Quack.
12. Knack.

A STRICTLY TRUE STORY.

While I was in the Territories this summer, looking for the best place to put a railroad through, we camped on the banks of a river that runs into the Yellowstone. There were high trees growing all along the banks; and soon we saw large nests in the branches, built of sticks, and the old birds flying about, feeding their young ones,—very hungry and noisy young ones, too, and not very polite always to their parents about what was given them. I noticed the old birds. They looked to me like wild geese, and I would not let anybody shoot them. It would be cruelty to the young, who ought to have a chance to grow up and learn manners; and then I have a respect for the wild goose. He knows the secret of the poles. No sailor ever got so far north but that the wild goose went still further. No doubt some of those flocks we see flying southward in the autumn have been hatched and raised within the arctic circle. If they might, they could tell us the icy secret that the Polar Sea has kept so long. Everybody laughed at me for saying that this looked like a species of goose, and one day I climbed up and looked into a nest. When I came down, the others asked what I had seen, and I said, "Goslings."

They all laughed. None of them believed me, and one asked me if I had ever seen a flock of whales in a clover-field.

The next day we went a mile or two down the river in our boats; and, as we were rowing along, we saw several flocks of young water-birds paddling about. They were pretty little yellow, fluffy things, and swam splendidly; and one of the men said, "I guess these are your goslings, Pullen."

We had not seen any mother-birds with their broods; but as we were coming back we saw a big bird hovering over the water, and looking at us with the greatest distrust. she had something large in her beak; and to see what she would do we pushed back among the rushes, and lay still. Then she came close down to the water, and, pat! dropped the thing from her beak. And, lo! there it was on the water, swimming away like the rest,—a little furry green and yellow gosling! We could not believe our eyes.

"This is the greatest wild-goose chase I ever was in!" muttered one of the men.

I was right. It was a variety of wild goose, which builds nests and raises goslings in high trees, and carries its young ones to water when they are big enough. I had not known it before. I only saw that the big bird "acted like a goose," which in this case means something pretty smart. It is so strange that I can hardly believe it now. I go once in a while, when I am in Washington, to the Smithsonian Institute, and look at a specimen nest and eggs, with a pair of the birds stuffed, which I killed and brought home myself, and gave to the society, before I can believe it all; and, when I tell it to people, they look ready to laugh over my story of goose-bearing trees.—*Kate Foote, in Independent.*

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged — not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort — by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

4. An important part of our mission is to mothers of young families, who feel the importance of their sacred charge and are anxious to learn all that can be known to make of their children good, upright, useful men and women,— good citizens of the country,— for which we must all work together if we would make it fulfil its mission among the nations of the world and to the races of mankind. We give books on subjects connected with the training of children, and our columns are open (in our "Mothers' Council") to all who have questions to ask or interesting suggestions to make on topics important to mothers.

TRAVELLING LIBRARIES.

The Travelling Libraries have now become an important part of Cheerful Letter work. In order that this department may be thoroughly organized and systematized, Miss Louise Brown, Box 91, South Framingham, Mass., has kindly consented to take it in charge. Will those interested in these libraries, and desiring information, kindly address Miss Brown as above?

Send requests for books and letters of thanks to the Book Club Secretary.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The committee call the attention of all readers of the *Cheerful Letter* and members of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to the change in our Direction printed this month. Those who desire to join the Cheerful Letter Exchange and to have correspondents assigned to them are requested to write to our assistant secretary, Miss Frances B. Fisher, 491 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass., instead of to Miss Langmaid as before. Miss Langmaid will retain a portion of the work; but, in order to meet the increasing requirements of the secretary's duties, it is necessary to have the aid of a second secretary.

We can provide a few correspondents for boys from ten to fourteen years old. Requests giving a reference should be sent to Miss Fisher, as above.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of an instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable. Do not offer odd numbers of periodicals, but send them directly to one of the many stations where they are acceptable.

Know you not that a good man does nothing for the sake of appearance, but for the sake of doing right?—*Epictetus.*

DIRECTIONS.

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Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Mrs. Catlin at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Mrs. Catlin, as above. Please give full name and address. Also send name of minister as reference. Some of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.